



Notes from Underground

Fyodor Dostoevsky

Study Guide



Summary

Characters

Literary Devices

Quotes

Quick Quizzes

Essays

Further



Characters

Character List

The Underground Man

Privacy - Terms

The anonymous narrator and protagonist of the novel. The Underground Man is a minor civil servant living in nineteenth-century St. Petersburg who has retired completely into what he calls the "underground," a state of total alienation and isolation from society. Severely misanthropic, the Underground Man believes himself to be more intelligent and perceptive than most other people in the world, but he also despises himself and frequently feels himself to be inferior or humiliated. We see all of the events and characters in the novel from the Underground Man's skewed perspective.

Read an [in-depth analysis of The Underground Man](#).

Liza

A young prostitute whom the Underground Man tries to rescue after sleeping with her at a brothel. Liza is somewhat shy and innocent despite her profession, and she responds emotionally to the Underground Man's efforts to convince her of the error of her ways. She is naturally loving and sympathetic, but she also has a sense of pride and nobility.

Read an [in-depth analysis of Liza](#).

Simonov

A former schoolmate of the Underground Man, the only one with whom the Underground Man currently maintains a relationship. The Underground Man sees Simonov as an honest,



independent man who is less narrow-minded than most people. Nonetheless, the Underground Man also suspects that Simonov despises him and finds his friendship burdensome.

Zverkov

A friend of Simonov's and another former schoolmate of the Underground Man. Zverkov is a successful officer in the army and well liked by his friends. The Underground Man hated Zverkov during their school days, considering him to be coarse, boastful, and stupid. He is also jealous of Zverkov's wealth, confidence and popularity.

Read an [in-depth analysis of Zverkov](#).

Ferfichkin

Another of the Underground Man's former schoolmates and an admirer of Zverkov. In school, Ferfichkin was the Underground Man's "bitterest enemy." The Underground Man describes Ferfichkin as impudent, foolish, and cowardly, and notes that Ferfichkin frequently borrows money from Zverkov.

Trudolyubov

Another former schoolmate of the Underground Man and a distant relation of Zverkov's. Trudolyubov is an honest man who treats the Underground Man with some degree of politeness. Nonetheless, he considers the Underground Man to be "nothing" and worships success of all kinds.

Apollon

The Underground Man's elderly servant. Apollon lives with the Underground Man and performs household tasks for him somewhat grudgingly. The Underground Man thinks that Apollon is constantly judging him, and that he is unforgivably vain. The Underground Man hates the way Apollon looks and talks.

Anton Antonych Setochkin

The head of Underground Man's department in the ministry. Anton Antonych is the closest thing to a friend that the Underground Man has. The Underground Man occasionally borrows money from Anton Antonych and visits his home on Tuesdays when he has an urge to be social.

The Officer

A military officer who treats the Underground Man dismissively in a tavern one night, thereby making himself the object of the Underground Man's obsessive desire for revenge for several years. The Underground Man resents the officer for his rank, wealth, physical prowess, and confidence, but is also intimidated by him for these same reasons, and therefore can never make a move against him.

Next section

The Underground Man





Test your knowledge

Take the **Character List**
Quick Quiz



Take a study break

QUIZ: Is This a Taylor Swift
Lyric or a Quote by Edgar
Allan Poe?



Take a study break

The 7 Most Embarrassing
Proposals in Literature

PLUS

Notes

[See All Notes](#)

Add Note with SparkNotes PLUS

Default Note

Add your thoughts right here!

Popular pages: *Notes from Underground*



The Underground Man: Character Analysis

CHARACTERS



Important Quotations Explained

QUOTES



Themes

LITERARY DEVICES

**Review Quiz**

FURTHER STUDY

Take a Study Break



QUIZ: Is This a Taylor Swift Lyric or a Quote by Edgar Allan Poe?



The 7 Most Embarrassing Proposals in Literature



The 6 Best and Worst TV Show Adaptations of Books



QUIZ: Which Greek God Are You?

Sign up for our latest news
and updates!

By entering your email address you agree to receive emails from SparkNotes and verify that you are over the age of 13. You can view our [Privacy Policy here](#). Unsubscribe from our emails at any time.

First Name

Last Name

Email

Sign Up



SparkNotes—the stress-free way to a better GPA

Quick Links

- No Fear
- Shakespeare
- Literature
- Guides
- Other
- Subjects
- Blog
- Teacher's Handbook

Premium
Study Tools

- SparkNotes PLUS
- Sign Up
- Log In
- PLUS Help

- More
- Help
 - How to Cite SparkNotes
 - How to Write Literary Analysis
 - About
 - Contact Us

Copyright © 2023 SparkNotes LLC

Terms of Use | Privacy | Cookie Policy | Do Not Sell My Personal Information

